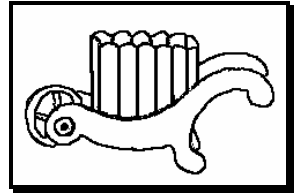


Salty Comments

Facts and Opinion about Open Salt Collecting



Number 63

July 1998

Euchre Salts, Celery Salts

In past years we have mentioned euchre salts here and there, but have covered only a portion of the total picture. We figure it is time to take a closer look at them and see what we can conclude.

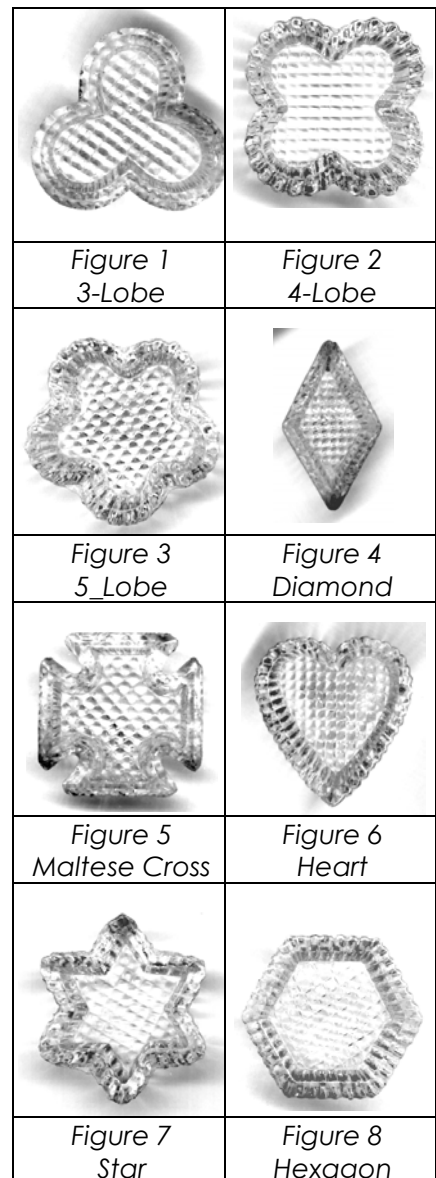
First of all, what is a euchre salt, and how did it get to be called that? We think the accepted description requires it to be small, made of glass with a diamond-point bottom, vertical prisms or ribs on the sides and relatively low sides. Recent salts made by the Degenhart Museum are the right size and shape, but lack the diamond bottom and ribbed sides.

The name evidently comes from a card game that we played years ago and have since forgotten. How that relates to these salts is a mystery. One dictionary definition of "euchre" as a verb is, "get the better of by scheming". Maybe someone thought the manufacturers were trying to do that when they sold them, since the old catalogs we have seen only call them "Celery Dips". Like the transition of the term "Table Salt" to "Master Salt", the source of the "Euchre Salt" name has yet to be explained to us.

For the ones we choose to call "euchres", there are 13 basic shapes we know of. The first of these are the 3-lobe, 4-lobe and 5-lobe shown in Figures 1-3. They were made in 1888 by Dalzell, Gilmore & Leighton in Findlay, OH, and later by Westmoreland in Jeanette, PA. There are several differences between the two factory's dishes. If you take a cross-section through the sides of the Westmoreland ones you see rounded ribs, while the earlier ones have triangular prisms. Another difference is the rim – Dalzell salts have a slanted flat surface around the outside.

Besides these first three shapes, Dalzell made two others that were not duplicated by Westmoreland. These are the diamond and the Maltese cross, shown in Figures 4 and 5. Westmoreland contributed 3 more that were not made earlier, the heart, star and hexagon, shown in Figures 6-8. Theirs are the easiest to find, probably because they were made more recently than the Dalzell ones.

These two firms were not the only ones to make euchres, because there are several other shapes that came from who knows where. The most popular of these is the butterfly shown in Figure 9 on the next page, which is scarce and much in demand by salt collectors.



(2)

Rarer yet is a “we don't know what to call it” shape, shown in Figure 10. The rarest of all is the shield shape, which we have seen only as a picture in Smith 7-3-1 (Figure 11). If you ever see two of them, please buy one for us.

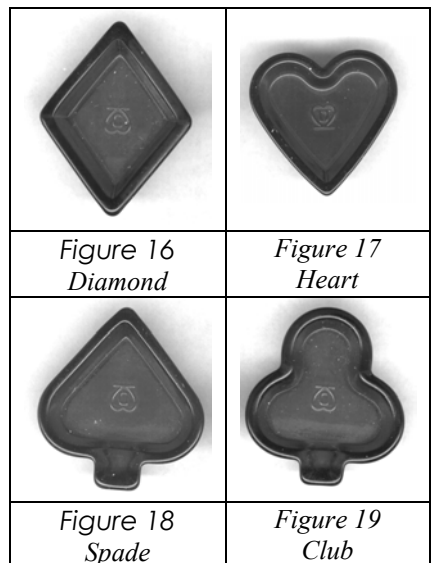
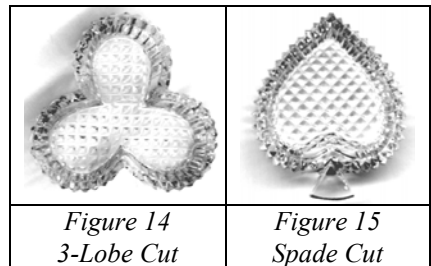
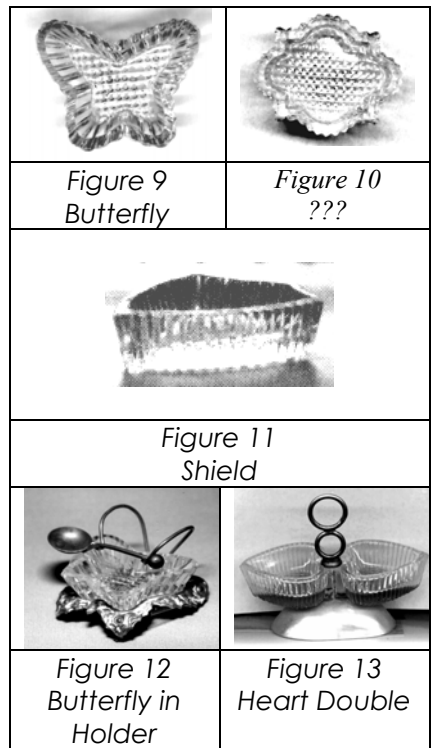
We have seen three of the euchre type in more elaborate settings. The first of these is a butterfly euchre in a holder, complete with spoon rest (Figure 12). We are fortunate to have one of these in our collection. The second one is just like the butterfly version, except that the salt is a heart euchre. We have seen only one of these and we don't have it. The third variation is a heart euchre double! This has a single piece of glass with two hearts joined together at the center, mounted on a shell foot and with a wire handle (Figure 13). The hearts have ribbed sides and diamond bottoms so they qualify as euchres. We'd love to find out where the salt came from, but the chances are small.

Another variety of euchre is the cut glass type. We know of two versions. The first and more common ones are the same as the pressed salts shown previously except that the design has been touched up with a cutting wheel. This makes the prisms on the sides sharp, flattens the rim, and dresses up the diamonds on the bottom. We have seen several of these, often with the glass much thinner than when it was pressed initially. They look just like the pressed version except the surfaces are cut.

A less common type of cut euchre is made from a pressed blank that has the desired basic shape. The glass is heavier and the sides are rounded. We have two like this – a 3-lobed one and another shaped like the spade suit in a deck of cards (Figures 14 and 15). There are probably more, but we haven't been looking for them in the past.

There are 4 salts that are similar in size and shape, but do not qualify as euchres because they have plain sides and bottoms. They are put out by the Degenhart Museum as a fund-raising venture, and come in a variety of colors. The first ones were red, and look like the four card suits (clubs, diamonds, hearts and spades) as shown in Figures 16-19. All have the “D in a Heart” mark.

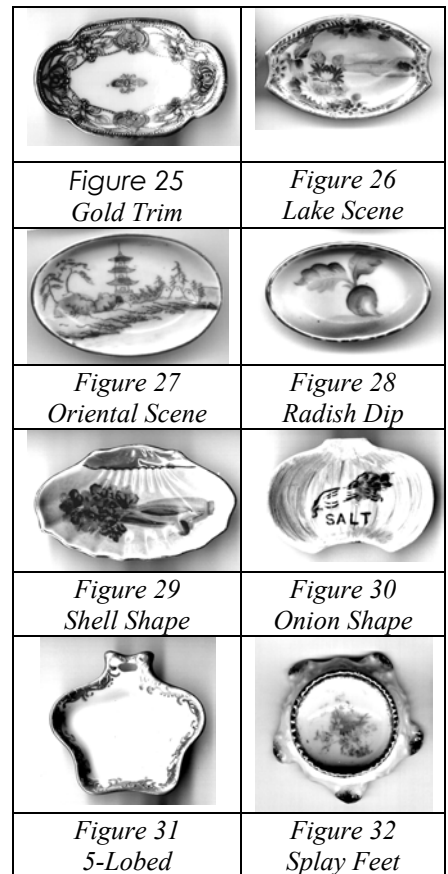
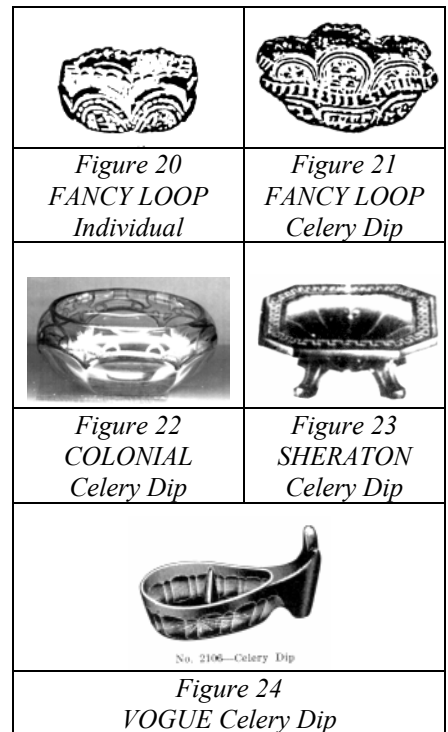
As mentioned in earlier Salty Comments, the Summit Art Glass Co. of Ravenna, OH has acquired the molds for the 6 Westmoreland shapes. They are making all but the 3-lobed version in several colors. Since they use the original molds, you cannot distinguish their salts from the originals except by the color. They have not made any clear versions yet to our knowledge. There may be more euchre shapes found in the future, but if you can find all of the ones mentioned here you will have accomplished something.



(3)

Euchres are only one of the many kinds of salts made for use with raw vegetables. A hundred years ago salt was good for you, and people would dip celery or radishes in it before taking a bite. Around the turn of the century this became a major reason for putting an open salt on the table. We've seen a 1901 Fostoria catalog where their entire line of open salts was pictured under the heading "Celery Dips". Sometimes a special size was made for this purpose, with the pattern showing both a salt and a celery dip. The earliest one we have encountered is the Heisey FANCY LOOP pattern. They show a 2" diameter individual salt (Figure 20), and also a 3-1/8" dish called a celery dip (Figure 21). In 1905 Duncan & Miller sold a COLONIAL pattern celery salt (Figure 22), shown here with silver deposit decoration. It has the same pattern name as their small pedestal salts. In 1919 U.S. Glass listed a celery dip in their SHERATON pattern (Figure 23) which matches their shakers, and Fostoria made one in their VOGUE pattern (Figure 24). We have only found this particular salt in the catalog. It is one of the strangest shapes we have seen, so maybe few were sold. There are many other mid-size glass salts that we suspect were designed for dipping vegetables, but we have not made an effort to identify all of them.

In the first half of the 20th century, glass lost out to porcelain on most of the fine dining tables. More of the open salts were made for dipping, and china made it easy to have many variations in shape and decoration. Shapes tended to be shallow like trays, Many came with a matching larger dish to hold the fresh vegetables - you can find porcelain celery sets for sale at many antique shows. Less common are the radish sets, which have the same tray shape salt for each place at the table but a round bowl for holding the vegetable supply. The more elegant large radish dishes have holes in the bottom to drain excess water and a plate underneath to catch it. The books say that scallions were eaten the same way, but we have yet to identify a salt or a set made specifically for that vegetable. Examples of these tray-type salts are shown in Figures 25-32. There are many different shapes, and a wide variety of marks on them. Notice that Figure 28 is from a radish set, with a picture of a radish in the bottom. Figures 29 and 30 have a bunch of celery as the decoration, with the first one adding a radish to the picture. The latter is pottery, not china, in the shape of an onion, and has the original price - 2/25¢ - stamped on the bottom. The dish in Figure 31 came as part of a set, with the vegetable holder the same shape and design as the salt shown. The last picture shows one of the splay-foot type, which must have been used for dipping because of the open shallow bowl. If you try to take salt out of it with a small spoon, the salt will run over the edge unless you are very careful (Try it!).



(4)

Although there are a great many shapes and decorations of china celery dips, the glass manufacturers did not ignore the market completely. A simple glass version was made by Cambridge in several colors, most marked with their C in a triangle (Figure 33). A fancier dish like this is shown in Figure 34, which has elaborate designs all over the outside surface. Figure 35 shows a “lacy” version, which comes in several colors. The designs on these latter two come from the mold when they are made. An even more elaborate version is Figure 36, where the overall shape is pressed but the design is cut in by hand.

We’re not sure what it is supposed to resemble – maybe an oyster shell? Perhaps the ultimate in glass tray-type salts are the intaglios. The process for making them was invented in Czechoslovakia in the mid-1920’s by Heinrich Hoffman, who earlier originated the butterfly mark to identify his glassware. In an intaglio item, the design is pressed into the bottom of the dish and is then frosted with an acid mixture. By subsequent polishing to remove any frosting from the flat bottom, you get a design that looks like it has been put in with a cutting wheel. Intaglio salts (and ash trays, pin dishes, perfume bottle stoppers, etc.) have been made in many different colors with many different shapes and designs. Sometimes the figures were painted, like Figure 37. Sometimes the dish was mounted in a holder like Figure 38, which increases its desirability and value substantially. It would take a book to cover all the variations, so we won’t try to do it here.

We hope you have some of the celery dips that we’ve covered, and that you will look at them with more respect in the future. Who knows – Medical Science might decide that salt is good for you after all. Then we can use these salts to dip our celery again, just like we did at Grandma’s house.

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References: Czechoslovakian Perfume Bottles & Boudoir Accessories, by Jacqueline Jones-North
10 books, “Open Salts Illustrated”, by Alan B. & Helen B. Smith
“5000 Open Salts”, by William Heacock & Patricia Johnson

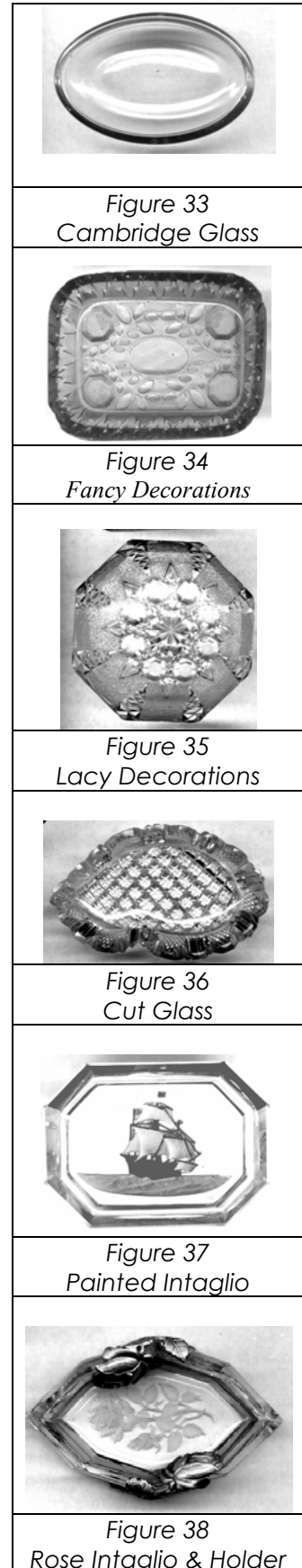


Figure 33
Cambridge Glass

Figure 34
Fancy Decorations

Figure 35
Lacy Decorations

Figure 36
Cut Glass

Figure 37
Painted Intaglio

Figure 38
Rose Intaglio & Holder

References for Salts Shown

Figure No.	Description	Length (mm.)	Maker or Country	H&J No.	Smith No.
1	Three-lobed Euchre Celery Dip	45	DGL, W#	3018	7-3-2
2	Four-lobed Euchre Celery Dip	45	DGL, W#	3020	7-2-3
3	Five-lobed Euchre Celery Dip	48	DGL, W#	3021	7-3-3
4	Diamond Euchre Celery Dip	52	DGL#		7-2-1
5	Maltese Cross Euchre Celery Dip	41	DGL#	3017	7-1-2
6	Heart Euchre Celery Dip	45	W#	3022	7-4-2
7	Six-Point Star Euchre Celery Dip	46	W#	3027	7-4-1
8	Hexagonal Euchre Celery Dip	40	W#	3025	7-4-3
9	Butterfly Euchre Celery Dip	47			7-2-2
10	Irregular Euchre Celery Dip	50			
11	Shield-Shaped Euchre Celery Dip				7-3-1
12	Butterfly Euchre in Holder	45			
13	Double Heart Euchre	90			
14	Three-lobed Cut Euchre	45		3019	
15	Spade Suit Cut Euchre	50		3024	276-2-3
16	Diamond Plain-Faced Celery Dip	53	Fenton		
17	Heart Plain-Faced Celery Dip	42	Fenton		
18	Spade Suit Plain-Faced Celery Dip	51	Fenton		
19	Club Suit Plain-Faced Celery Dip	51	Fenton		
20	FANCY LOOP Individual Salt	50	Heisey	2674	83-4-2
21	FANCY LOOP Celery Dip	80	Heisey	3833	271-4-2
22	COLONIAL Celery Dip	70	Duncan	3912	482-4-3
23	SHERATON Celery Dip		US Glass		
24	VOGUE Celery Dip		Fostoria		
25	Porcelain Celery Dip	90	Noritake		
26	Porcelain Celery Dip	90	(Nippon)		
27	Porcelain Celery Dip	62	(Japan)		
28	Porcelain Radish Dip	62	Noritake		
29	Shell-Shape Celery/Radish Dip	100			
30	Onion-Shape Pottery Celery Dip	92			
31	Five-Lobe Porcelain Celery Dip	70	(Bavaria)		
32	Splay-Foot Porcelain Celery Dip	65		1404	
33	Oval Glass Celery Dip	64	Cambridge	831	262-1-2
34	Fancy Glass Celery Dip	63		612	
35	Lacy Octagonal Celery Dip	60		530	105-4-1
36	Cut Glass Shell-Shape? Celery Dip	84			477-2-2
37	Painted Intaglio, Clipper Ship	70			50-1-1
38	Intaglio, Gold Roses Holder	68		87	102-2-1